(d) Confidentiality of information governing the banker customer relationship is a widely accepted international practice.

Phasing out of subsidy on Foodgrains

1498. SHRI RAHASBIHARI BARIK: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government propose to phase out subsidy on foodgrains during the current year;

(b) if so, the details of the plan to phase out subsidy alongwith its implications; and

(c) the details of the policy changes effected during the last one year to do away with heavy mounting burden of subsidy?

THE MINISTER OF FINANCE (SHRI YASHWANT SINHA): (a) There is no such proposal under the consideration of the Government.

(b) In view of (a) above, (b) does not arise.

(c) In order to reduce the widening gap between the procurement and distribution cost and the PDS issue price, and the consequent increase in food subsidy to Rs. 8700 crores in 1998-99 (RE), the Government raised the issue price for APL families under TPDS from 29 January 1999. The budgeted food subsidy for 1999-2000 is now Rs. 8200 crores.

Accounts of PSUs of Bihar

1499. PROF. VIJAY KUMAR MALHOTRA:
SHRI RAGHAVJI:

Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that CAG in its report pulled up Bihar Government for not keeping accounts of 49 State PSUs as reported in the Indian Express of November 21, 1998 under the caption, "Death stalking unpaid Bihar PSU worker"; and

(b) if so, the details in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF FINANCE (SHRI YASHWANT SINHA): (a) and (b) The information is being collected and will be laid on the Table of the House.

Prime Minister's Discussion with Prof. Amartya Sen

1500. PROF. VIJAY KUMAR MALHOTRA:
SHRI RAGHAVJI:

Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Prime Minister had met Noble Laureate Prof. Amartya Sen; if so, the details of the discussions held with him; and

(b) what are the concrete steps Government propose to take in the wake of these discussions?

THE MINISTER OF FINANCE (SHRI YASHWANT SINHA): (a) and (b) The Prime Minister had met Noble Laureate Prof. Amartya Sen. Prime Minister congratulated him. No formal talks were held with Prof. Amartya Sen.

पंजाब में चावल मिलों के सामने संकट पैदा होना

1501. **श्री बलवंत सिंह रामूवालिया:**
श्री राज मोहिन्दर सिंह:

क्या **खाद्य प्रसंस्करण उद्योग** मंत्री यह बताने की कृपा करेंगे कि:

(क) क्या यह सच है कि पंजाब की चावल मिलों के सामने कुछ संकट उत्पन्न हो जाने के कारण उन्हें उत्पादन बंद करने के लिए विवश होना पड़ रहा है;

(ख) यदि नहीं, तो क्या सरकार ने औद्योगिक समस्याओं को दूर करने के लिए हाल ही में कोई कदम उठाए हैं; और

(ग) यदि हां, तो क्या कदम उठाए गए हैं और चावल मिल एसोसिएशन के अनुसार मिलों के सामने पेश आ रही समस्याओं का ब्यौरा क्या है?

खाद्य प्रसंस्करण उद्योग मंत्री (श्री प्रमोद महाजन): (क) से (ग) जी नहीं। लेकिन पंजाब सरकार से एक अनुरोध प्राप्त हुआ है कि 15.9.98 से 27.10.98 के दौरान खरीदे गए धान के लिए चावल की

विनिर्दिष्टियों में ढील देने की अनुमति दी जाए क्योंकि सितम्बर और अक्तूबर 1998 के दौरान बेमौसम वर्षा हुई थी। सरकार इस पर विचार कर रही है।

Review of Working of Food Processing Units

1502. SHRI ANANTA SETHI: Will the Minister of FOOD PROCESSING INDUSTRIES be pleased to state:

(a) the food processing industry which were sanctioned and set up in the country during Eighth Plan;

(b) the State-wise details of those Food Processing Units;

(c) whether Government have reviewed the working of those units;

(d) if not, whether any study is proposed to be conducted and any action plan proposed to be implemented to strengthen those units; and

(e) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF FOOD PROCESSING INDUSTRIES (SHRI PRAMOD MAHAJAN): (a) and (b) While the Ministry of Food Processing Industries do not set up food processing units directly in any State, under its Plan Schemes it provides financial assistance in the form of loan and grant to private industry, non-Governmental Organisations, Cooperatives and Public Sector Undertakings etc. for the growth, promotion and development of food processing industries. The schemes are project oriented and not State specific. During the 8th Plan period, Plan funds of Rs. 177.11 crore were utilised.

'c) to (e) The work relating to luation of projects funded by the Ministry during 8th Five Year Plan and first year of the Ninth Plan has been entrusted to the National Council of Applied Economic Research in February, 1999 and the work is scheduled to be completed within 6 months. The scope of the study is to find the present status, to review the past performance, to identify the managerial/financial problems; and to suggest corrective action.

Priority Sector benefits to Food Processing Industries

1503. SHRI SURESH KALMADI: Will the Minister of FOOD PROCESSING INDUSTRIES be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Government have made the food processing industry a priority sector for bank lending; and

(b) if so, what benefits will accrue to the industry as a result of this decision?

THE MINISTER OF FOOD PROCESSING INDUSTRIES (SHRI PRAMOD MAHAJAN): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) As 40% of the net Bank credit of all the Banks is targetted towards the priority sector, easy availability of finance to the food processing sector is ensured.

भारतीय प्रसारण सेवा को हुआ घाटा

1504. **श्री दिलीप सिंह जूदेव:** क्या **सूचना और प्रसारण** मंत्री यह बताने की कृपा करेंगे कि:

(क) सरकार द्वारा आठवीं योजनावधि के दौरान भारतीय प्रसारण सेवा क्षेत्रों से प्रति वर्ष कुल कितना राजस्व अर्जित किया गया;

(ख) क्या विदेशी और निजी प्रसारण माध्यमों की तुलना में मंत्रालय के अधीन प्रसारण सेवा के राजस्व अर्जन में लगातार गिरावट आयी है;

(ग) यदि हां, तो उसके क्या कारण हैं और इसके द्वारा अर्जित किए गए लाभांश का कुल प्रतिशत कितना रहा; और

(घ) क्या उस स्थिति के बारे में कोई आकलन किया गया है जिसके अन्तर्गत भारतीय प्रसारण सेवा को भारी घाटा हो रहा है?

सूचना और प्रसारण मंत्रालय में राज्य मंत्री (श्री मुख्तार नकवी): (क) आठवीं योजना के दौरान प्रसार भारती (आकाशवाणी तथा दूरदर्शन) द्वारा अर्जित कुल राजस्व निम्न अनुसार है:—